

Shoryu Katsura

The Theory of *Apoha* in Kuiji's *Cheng weishi lun Shuji*

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in:

Chen-kuo Lin / Michael Radich (eds.)

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in memoriam

John R. McRae (1947-2011)

The Theory of *Apoha* in Kuiji's *Cheng weishi lun Shuji*¹

Shoryu Katsura

1

The fifth- to sixth-century Indian Buddhist logician, Dignāga (Chenna 陳那 ca. 480-530), is often regarded as the founder of “New Logic” in India. As a matter of fact, in his main work, the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* (PS, *Ji liang lun* 集量論) with *Svavṛtti* (PSV),² Dignāga integrated two traditions of

¹ I sincerely thank Dr. Michael Radich for his great efforts to improve not only the English of my paper, but even more, my understanding of the Chinese texts of Kuiji.

² PS & PSV are only available in two Tibetan translations; Ernst Steinkellner has reconstructed the first chapter into Sanskrit, working mainly from the Sanskrit version of Jinendrabuddhi's *Ṭīkā* (Steinkellner, 2005). Sanskrit reconstruction of the other chapters is also under way.

No Chinese translation is extant apart from Fazun's (法尊) modern studies, e.g. *Ji liang lun lüjie* (集量論略解, Beijing 1982), though some catalogues record that Yijing (義淨) translated PS & PSV into Chinese. I owe the following information to Dr. Michael Radich.

Kaiyuan Shijiao lu 開元釋教錄:

1. “*Pramāṇasamuccaya* in four fascicles (translated in [the year] Jingyun 2 [711 C.E.]; the above [entries] largely adopt the date of promulgation, and thus the date of appearance is identical [in all cases]). The above sixty-one works, in 239 fascicles ...were translated by the Śramaṇa Yijing of Qizhou” 集量論四卷(景雲二年譯已上多取奏行年月所以出日名同)右六十一部二百三十九卷...沙門釋義淨。齊州人; T55:2154.568b3-5.

2. “*Pramāṇasamuccaya* in four fascicles, translated by the Trepitaka Yijing of the Great Tang [dynasty]” 集量論四卷 大唐三藏義淨譯; T55:2154.637c3.

Zhenyuan xinding Shijiao mulu 貞元新定釋教目錄 repeats this information verbatim; T55:2157.868c19 ff., T55:2157.972b15-16. See also Zhisheng's *Xu gu jin yi jing tu ji* 續古今譯經圖紀: “*Pramāṇasamuccaya* (four fascicles)” 集量論一部(四卷); T55:2152.370c17-18.

Indian logic, viz., the tradition of debate (*vāda*, *lun* 論), and the tradition of the theory of knowledge, which deals with the means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*, *liang* 量), into a single system, which we may call “Epistemological Logic”. What he achieved in this work becomes clear when we compare its internal structure with that of the *Nyāyamukha* (NMukh, *Yinming zhengli men lun* 因明正理門論, T1628), one of Dignāga’s earlier works.³

NMukh is essentially a manual of debate like the *Nyāya-sūtra* of Gautama, the *Vādavidhi* (*Lun gui* 論軌) of Vasubandhu, and other similar works; it deals with two main subjects, viz. proof (*sādhana*, *nengli* 能立) and refutation (*dūṣaṇa*, *nengpo* 能破). According to Dignāga, a proof consists of three propositions/members (*avayava*): thesis (*pakṣa*, *zong* 宗),

Prof. Toru Funayama has kindly pointed out to me that Xuanzang’s (玄奘) disciples seem to have been well informed about the contents of PS & PSV, even though Xuanzang did not translate them into Chinese. For example, Wengui’s (文軌) *Yinming ruzheng lilun shu* (因明入正理論疏): “In addition, in the *Pramāṇasamuccaya*, Dignāga states that when, in the *Vādavidhi*, the jar, as *dharmīn*, is given as the *sādharmyadrṣṭānta*, it is [because the *Vādavidhi*] is either not by Vasubandhu, or was written when Vasubandhu’s studies were still incomplete; after his studies were complete, he wrote a treatise called *Vādavidhāna*, where he took as the *drṣṭānta* [the statement:] “Created things are non-eternal”, which does not differ from my own position. Given that the *Pramāṇasamuccaya* contains this statement...” 又集量論中陳那云，論軌論中，以瓶有法為同喻者，其論非是世親所造，或是世親未學時造，學成已後，造論式論，即以所作無常為同喻體，不異我義。集量論中既有此說... (X848:53.687a1-4). See also Hattori, 1968: 114-115.

³ Synopsis of NMukh: Introduction T1628:32.1a5; Ia Thesis & Pseudo-thesis 1a6~1b3; Ib Reason & Pseudo-reason 1b4~2c1; Ic Example & Pseudo-example 2c2~3b7; Id Perception & Inference 3b7~c16; II Refutation & Pseudo-refutation 3c16~6a3; Conclusion 6a3~6.

NMukh is currently available only in Chinese translation, but the existence of a Sanskrit manuscript has been known for some time now; I sincerely hope that it will become accessible to Buddhist scholars, which I am sure will greatly promote the study of *yinming* (因明) in the Chinese-speaking world, because the text has played such an important role in the development of *yinming*. For the time being, we must satisfy ourselves by reconstructing the Sanskrit text from fragmentary quotes discovered in other Sanskrit texts, such as Jinendrabuddhi’s commentary on PSV. As one such attempt, I have reconstructed the concluding verse of NMukh (為開智人慧毒藥 啓斯妙義正理門 諸有外量所迷者 今越邪途契真義, 6a5~6) from Jinendrabuddhi’s *Ṭīkā* in the following manner: *mukhamātram idaṃ sadarthanīṭh kṛtam udghaṭitajñadhīvaṣagham | kusṛtīr apavidhya tīrthyatarkabhramitāḥ katham arthatattvabhājāḥ ||* Steinkellner, Krasser and Lasic, 2005: xlviij fn. 77.

reason (*hetu*, *yin* 因) and example (*dr̥ṣṭānta*, *yu* 喻).⁴ In the first half of NMukh, Dignāga discusses these elements of the proof, together with their fallacious counterparts: the pseudo-thesis (*pakṣābhāsa*, *sizong* 似宗), the pseudo-reason (*hetvābhāsa*, *siyin* 似因) and the pseudo-example (*dr̥ṣṭāntābhāsa*, *siyu* 似喻). He then inserts a brief description of the two means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*, *liang* 量), viz., perception (*pratyakṣa*, *xianliang* 現量) and inference (*anumāna*, *biliang* 比量), together with pseudo-perception (*pratyakṣābhāsa*, *sixianliang* 似現量). In the second half of NMukh, Dignāga discusses refutation and pseudo-refutation (*dūṣṇābhāsa*, *sinengpo* 似能破). He simply defines refutation as pointing out the incompleteness of a proof formulation (*nyūnatā*, *que* 闕) and other points of defeat (*nigrahasthāna*, *fuchu* 負處), or an error in one of the members of a proof, such as being a pseudo-thesis. Dignāga does not give any detailed description of the points of defeat, although it is one of the most important topics in the tradition of debate in India; but he gives a full discussion of fourteen types of erroneous criticisms (*jāti*, *guolei* 過類).⁵

Now, PS and PSV have a completely different structure from NMukh. That is to say, PS/PSV consists of six chapters: (1) Perception (*pratyakṣa*), (2) Inference for Oneself (*svārthānumāna*), (3) Inference for Others (*parārthānumāna*), (4) Example (*dr̥ṣṭānta*), (5) *Apoha* and (6) Erroneous Criti-

⁴ In PSV, Dignāga comes to regard the thesis as a proposition that merely proposes the case and does not positively contribute to the proof.

⁵ The various kinds of points of defeat are found in the medical text, the *Carakasamhitā*; in the early Buddhist manual of debate, the **Upāyahṛdaya* (*Fangbian xin lun* 方便心論); and in the *Nyāya-sūtra* Chapter 5-2. It is interesting to note in this connection that in his *Vādanyāya*, Dharmakīrti, who, unlike Dignāga, does not deal with the erroneous criticisms, gives a full discussion of the points of defeat, and criticizes Nyāya interpretations of their typology of twenty-two points of defeat.

Prof. Yuichi Kajiyama has proven that what are called erroneous criticisms in the *Nyāya-sūtra*, Chapter 5-1, stem from Nāgārjuna's method of argument called *prasaṅga* (*reductio ad absurdum*), and points out that the **Upāyahṛdaya* (attributed to Nāgārjuna) lists twenty such arguments not as erroneous, but as proper criticisms; Kajiyama, 1991. However, Dignāga does not regard these as proper criticisms; instead, he reveals the falsity of such arguments by pointing out errors in the reason and other members. It is also well known that Dignāga owes a lot in this regard to Vasubandhu's *Vādaśāstra* and the **Tarka-śāstra* (*Rushilun fan zhinan pin* 如實論反質難品) attributed to Vasubandhu.

cisms (*jāti*). Unlike Vasubandhu, who accepted three *pramāṇas*, viz. perception, inference and scripture/verbal testimony (*āgama/śabda*), Dignāga admits only the first two *pramāṇas*, and discusses them respectively in the first two chapters of PS & PSV. He regards the proof as a kind of inference that is verbally expressed for the sake of others; hence, he names inference proper “inference for oneself” and the proof “inference for others”. In this way, he succeeds in integrating the theories of proof developed by the tradition of debate into his new system of epistemological logic. The third and fourth chapters of PS & PSV, which deal with thesis and pseudo-thesis, reason and pseudo-reason, and example and pseudo-example, naturally inherited a lot of verses, passages and ideas from NMukh. The same is true of the sixth chapter, which deals with erroneous criticisms. The remaining chapter, the fifth, deals with Vasubandhu’s third *pramāṇa*, i.e., verbal testimony (*śabda*), and identifies it with inference; at the end of the chapter, Dignāga declares that other *pramāṇas* maintained by other schools of Indian philosophy, such as analogy/identification (*upamāna*), are also included in the category of inference in his system. Thus it is clear that the theories of debate formulated in NMukh are completely embedded in the framework of the theory of the *pramāṇas* in PS & PSV.

The main theme of the fifth chapter of PS & PSV is the theory of *apoha* or “exclusion/negation”, or more precisely, “exclusion/negation of others” (*anyāpoha/anyavyāvṛtti*), which is in fact a feature common to both inference and verbal testimony, as well as to conceptual cognitions (*vikalpa* 分別) in general. In other words, verbal testimony and the other *pramāṇas* are included under the category of inference because they all share the same function of “excluding others”.

Since, as we have seen above, NMukh does not discuss the theory of *apoha*, and since PS & PSV are not available in the Chinese Tripiṭaka,⁶ I previously assumed that Chinese Buddhist scholars in the classical period had no idea about *apoha*. Subsequently, I was told that Prof. Dr. Makio Takemura (竹村牧男; formerly of Tsukuba University, now President of Tōyō University) once remarked in a lecture at Kōyasan University that Kuiji (窺基, 632-682), the direct disciple of Xuanzang (玄奘, 602-664), re-

⁶ Please see fn. 1 above.

fers to the theory of *apoha* in his extensive commentary (*shuji* 述記) on his master's *Cheng weishi lun* (成唯識論). In this paper, I would like to show the traces of the transmission of Dignāga's theory of *apoha* in Kuiji's work, which will indicate that Xuanzang, though he did not translate PS & PSV into Chinese, must have discussed some of Dignāga's important theories, including his *apoha* theory, during his lectures, in order for Kuiji to have been able to utilize that theory in his explications of his master's work.

2

The theory of *apoha* mainly deals with the problem of the meaning of a linguistic item/word (*śabdārtha*). According to Dignāga, a linguistic item refers neither to an individual object (*vyakti*) nor to the universal (*sāmānyajāti*) that is shared by the individual members of the same class, but refers rather to *apoha*, or more precisely, *anyāpoha* (exclusion of others), which is nothing other than our mental construction. Thus, *apoha* is an imaginary existent, but it possesses all the properties of the universal (*jātidharma*), viz. singularity (*ekatva*), eternity (*nityatva*) and existence in all the members of the same class (*pratyekaparīsamāpti*).⁷ Therefore, according to Dignāga, a linguistic item in fact refers to the universal, which is our mental construction, and is not a real existent, as was imagined by his opponents.⁸

⁷ PSV *ad* PS 5.36d; Pind, 2009: A15.

⁸ In PSV *ad* PS 5.36d, Dignāga makes the following remark: "A linguistic item denotes entities qualified by the negation of other referents" (*śabdo 'rthāntaranivṛttiviśiṣṭān eva bhāvān āha*). Dharmakīrti quotes this remark in his *Pramāṇavārttikasvavṛtti*, Gnoli 1960, pp. 62-63. Dharmakīrti seems to hold the view that a linguistic item (or verbal cognition and conceptual cognition in general) refers directly to the general characteristic (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa* or the universal), but refers indirectly to the external entity that produced the verbal cognition. That external entity is qualified by various exclusions of others belonging to the same class or other classes; it is a unique reality that may be called the particular characteristic (*svalakṣaṇa*) of the object itself. Now, it is not clear whether Dignāga would have endorsed a view like that of Dharmakīrti, because he did not discuss this problem any further. However, it is clear that for him, a linguistic item refers directly to the universal, i.e., the general characteristic of the entity.

Before I present a brief outline of Dignāga’s theory of *apoha*, I would like to mention that NMukh at least once refers to the idea of “exclusion of others” (*jianbieyu* 簡別餘) in the context of the Inference, as E. Frauwallner pointed out long ago⁹. The seventeenth verse of NMukh reads as follows:

A real entity (*shi* 事) possesses many properties, which the inferential mark (*xiang* 相) does not indicate all together [at the same time]. It reveals only through the exclusion of others (*jianbieyu* 簡別餘) whatever necessarily follows [from that which is to be inferred].

一事有多法 相非一切行 唯由簡別餘 表定能隨逐 (T1628:32.3c 10-11).¹⁰

In this connection, Dignāga is discussing the essential nature of inferential cognition. For example, when a puff of smoke rises from the top of a hill, we may infer the existence of a fire on the hill, which produced the smoke. Here, the smoke is the inferential mark (*liṅga*, *xiang/nengxiang* 相/能相), and the fire is that which is to be inferred from the smoke. Now, Dignāga argues that an inferential mark reveals its object (*liṅgin*, *suoxiang* 所相), i.e., that which is to be inferred (*anumeya*, *suobi* 所比), through the exclusion of others (*anyavyavaccheda/anyāpoha*), as e.g. smoke reveals a fire by excluding non-fire. In other words, when we infer a fire from smoke, the inferential mark, i.e., smoke, does not reveal the real fire itself, but it does reveal the existence of a fire in general, by excluding non-fire. By contrast, if a fire exists in front of us, we directly perceive the fire itself as it really is. If the fire is out of reach of our senses, however, and we cannot perceive the real fire, we may infer the existence of a fire in general, and it is this that Dignāga names “exclusion of non-fire”. Therefore, “exclusion of others” is a mode of indirectly know-

⁹ Frauwallner 1959, 103.

¹⁰ There is a corresponding verse in PS 2.12: *don gyi chos rnam du ma ni || thams cad rtags las rtogs ma yin || gang zhig rjes 'brel gzhan las ni || ldog pa rtogs par byed pa yin ||* Dr. Horst Lasic kindly provided me with the following reconstruction: *arthasyānekadharmā hi na liṅgāt sarvathā gatāḥ* (or *anekadharmaṇo 'rthasya na liṅgāt sarvathā gatīḥ*) | *anubaddhasya vicchedaṃ gamayaty anyato yataḥ ||*

ing an object. As discussed immediately below, the object of such an indirect cognition itself is regarded as “exclusion of others” as well.

2.1

According to Dignāga, there are only two *pramāṇas*, viz. direct perception (*pratyakṣa*, *xianliang* 現量) and inference (*anumāna*, *biliang* 比量). The former cognizes the unique and particular object itself (*svalakṣaṇa*, *zixiang* 自相), and the latter the general or universal characteristics (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*, *gongxiang* 共相) of that object. Thus the “exclusion of others” is nothing but the general characteristic of an object, which other schools of Indian philosophy call the universal (*sāmānya/jāti*) and which they regard as real. Dignāga, on the other hand, regards it as a mere mental construction. As I mentioned above, in the fifth chapter of PS and PSV, Dignāga deals with the third possible *pramāṇa*, i.e., verbal testimony, and identifies it with inference. Therefore, for him, a verbal cognition is a kind of inference in which a linguistic item plays the role of an inferential mark. Thus, a linguistic item refers to its referent by excluding others, and the referent, or what is meant by the linguistic item, is “exclusion of others”, i.e., the general characteristic.

In this connection, it is to be noted that Dignāga classifies our cognitions into two kinds, viz., (1) immediate perception or sensation, and (2) mediated conceptual cognition. The former is regarded as *pramāṇa*; while the latter, on the other hand, includes both *pramāṇas*, such as inference and verbal cognition, and non-*pramāṇas* or erroneous cognitions. Thus, the “exclusion of others” is a general principle that pertains to any conceptual cognition. In other words, whenever we make a certain judgment, whether it is right or wrong, we do so in the form, “It is certainly a cow, not a horse and so on”; generally speaking, “It is certainly A, not non-A (*A evāyam, nānyaḥ*).”

2.2

In order to specify what the “others” are for each linguistic expression, Dignāga presupposes a certain hierarchy of universal concepts, which

reminds us of the Vaiśeṣika hierarchy of the six categories (*padārthas*) and their sub-categories. According to Dignāga, the highest category of universal is “the knowable” (*jñeya*, *suozhi* 所知), which is divided into two sub-categories, viz., “existent” (*sat*, *you* 有) and “non-existent” (*asat*, *wu* 無). The existent is further divided into three groups, viz., “substance” (*dravya*, *shi* 實), “quality” (*guṇa*, *de* 德) and “action” (*karman*, *ye* 業).¹¹

Substance is divided into things which are “made of the earth element” (*di suocheng* 地所成), “made of the water element” (*shui suocheng* 水所成), etc. Things that are made of the earth element may be divided into “trees”, “pots”, etc. Trees are classified into cherry trees, pine trees, etc., and pine trees are further divided into those “with flowers”, “with fruit”, etc.

In like manner, quality is divided into “color”, “sound”, etc.; and action is divided into “upward motion”, etc.

Now, let us take as an example the word “tree”. The word “tree” directly excludes pots, etc., that belong to the same level of the hierarchy, by sharing the same universal of “being made of the earth element”. It also indirectly excludes things that are made of the water element, because they are excluded by the universal of “being made of the earth element”. Generally speaking, a given word X excludes the referents of those words that share the same universal with the referents of X, and it further excludes whatever is excluded by the words that express the universals shared by the referents of X. Thus, the “others” in the expression “exclusion of others” does not mean just anything “other than itself”, but rather, is limited to “others” that belong to the same level of the hierarchy as those referred to by a given word, and to “others” of those universals belonging to higher levels of the hierarchy, which are possessed by the referent of that word.

Furthermore, Dignāga proposes that a given word, by excluding “others” at higher orders, engenders definite knowledge (*niścaya*) of the universals of higher orders. For example, the word “tree” determines that its referent (i.e., a tree) is made of the earth element, that it is a kind of substance, that it is existent and that it is knowable. A given word also

¹¹ For a brief description of Dignāga’s *apoha* theory, see Katsura, 1979.

awakens the expectation (*ākāṅkṣaṇa*) that it will determine which particular it actually refers to, as e.g. whether the tree designated by the word “tree” is a cherry tree, a pine tree, or something else. A given word is indifferent (*upekṣā*) to the subsets of the referents excluded by words of higher orders. For example, the word “tree” (being made of the earth element) is not concerned with the question of whether or not its referent is milk (being made of the water element), for that is simply out of the question. Thus, the “exclusion of others” is not the sole function of a linguistic item or a word; a word, by excluding others, also produces a definite cognition, and it may also entail expectation or indifference to other things.

So far, I have discussed Dignāga’s theory of *apoha* mainly from the perspective of epistemology. The “exclusion of others” (or “excluding others”) is the function of conceptual cognition in general, which includes both inferential and verbal knowledge. It is also the object of conceptual cognition, which is called the general characteristic (*sāmānyalakṣaṇa*), and which is nothing but a mental construction, unlike the real universals (*sāmānya/jāti*) maintained by other schools of Indian philosophy. Nonetheless, the “exclusion of others”, according to Dignāga, possesses some of the essential features of the universal, viz. “singularity”, “eternity” and “being present in all the members of the same class”.

Now let me explain some of the semantic aspects of Dignāga’s theory of *apoha*. I have mentioned that for him, the exclusion of others is the referent or meaning of a word. As a matter of fact, at the very beginning of the fifth chapter of PS & PSV, he examines four possible candidates for the meaning of words, viz., an individual (*bheda*), a universal (*sāmānya*), a relation (*sambandha*) between the two, and a thing possessing a universal (*tadvat*). He rejects all four of these possibilities, and comes to the conclusion that the meaning of a word is the “exclusion of others”. Furthermore, he discusses how the theory of *apoha* can explain linguistic phenomena in which two words refer to one and the same object (*sāmānādhikaraṇya*), and in which two words are in the relation of the modifier and the modified (*viśeṣaṇaviśeṣyabhāva*). He also refers to the semantic theories of other schools, especially that of the Sāṅkhyas, and demonstrates the supremacy of his semantic theory.

3

I will now discuss the problem of the extent to which Kuiji knows Dignāga's theory of *apoha*.

3.1

When he refutes the Sarvāstivādin categories of *nāma-*, *pada-*, and *vyāñjana-kāya* (*mingshen* 名身, *jushen* 句身, *wenshen* 文身, namely, word, phrase/sentence and syllable), Kuiji discusses the question of what constitutes the object of each. He refers to the two kinds of objects proposed by Dignāga, viz., the particular or “own” characteristic (*zixiang* 自相, *svalakṣaṇa*) and the general characteristic (*gongxiang* 共相, *sāmānyalakṣaṇa*); and he clearly states that the former is the object of direct perception (*xianliang* 現量, *pratyakṣa*) and cannot be referred to by a verbal designation, while the latter is the object of the word (*ming* 名), as well as a conventional cognition (*jiazhi* 假智, **prajñapti/saṃvṛti-jñāna*). He lays out these views in the following passages:

[1] The particular characteristics of *dharmas* are not expressed by the word. They are realized by perception only. A word expresses the general characteristic only.

諸法自相非名等詮、唯現量證。名唯詮共相 (T1830:43.288a17-18).

[2] Question: For what reason are they named “particular characteristic” or “general characteristic”?

Answer: The essences of *dharmas* are known by direct perception only, and verbal designations do not refer to the particular characteristic. Those properties of *dharmas* that are referred to by verbal designations and taken as the objects of conventional cognition are the general characteristics [of *dharmas*].

問曰。何故名自相共相。

答曰。法自體唯證智知、言說不及是自相。若法體性言說所及、假智所緣、是爲共相 (T1830:43.288a20-23).

Kuiji is well aware of the fact that there are two different usages of the expression *sāmānyalakṣaṇa* (*gongxiang* 共相). Namely, the Sarvāstivādins understand it to refer to “suffering” (*ku* 苦), “emptiness” (*kong* 空), and other properties which pertain to all *dharmas*; while Dignāga and other Buddhist logicians define it as the “exclusion/negation of others”. Kuiji says that when we use the word “fire”, we exclude non-fire (*zhe feihuo* 遮非火), and that the exclusion of non-fire is the property that is shared by all fires. He distinguishes the two different usages of the general characteristic in Buddhist literature in the following passage:

[3] Objection: If all *dharmas* are not referred to by verbal designations, and yet, at the same time, you say that that which is referred to by the verbal designation is the general characteristic, is this not an egregious contradiction?

Answer: The general characteristic is something superimposed upon the essence of the *dharma*, and there is no separate entity apart [from the *dharma*, that is called the general characteristic]. Whenever a word denotes fire or other *dharmas*, it [actually] excludes/negates non-fire, etc. This meaning [i.e., “exclusion/negation of non-fire”] is common to all fires. Only thus can the term “general/common characteristic” be meaningful. It does not [mean, in this context,] the principle (*li* 理), [that is,] general characteristics such as “suffering”, “emptiness”, and so on [which are characteristics of all *dharmas* according to the Sarvāstivādins].

問曰。如一切法 皆言不及。而復乃云言說及者是為共相。一何乖返。

答曰。共相是法自體上義、更無別體。且如名詮火等法時、遮非火等。此義即通一切火上。故言共相得其義也。非苦空等之共相理 (T1830:43.288a23-27).

In this connection, it is most interesting that Kuiji, like the Vaiśeṣikas and Dignāga as mentioned above, also refers to the hierarchy of *dharmas* in terms of universals and particulars, although he puts this remark in the mouth of an opponent. Namely, when the “defiled” ([*you*] *lou* [有] 漏, *sāsrava*) and “undefiled” (*wulou* 無漏, *anāsrava*) are regarded as universals (lit., *gongxiang* 共相, general characteristics), “matter” (*seyun* 色蘊,

rūpaskandha) is regarded as the particular (lit., *zixiang* 自相, particular characteristics). However, when matter is regarded as the universal, color-sphere (*sechu* 色處, *rūpāyatana*) and so on is regarded as the particulars; when color is regarded as the universal, blue and so forth (*qing deng* 青等, *nīlādi*) is regarded as the particular; when blue and so forth is regarded as the universal, trees and so forth (*shu deng* 樹等, **vṛkṣādi*) are regarded as the particulars; when trees and so forth are regarded as the universals, branches and so forth (*zhi deng* 枝等, **śākhādi*) are regarded as the particulars; and when branches and so forth are regarded as the universals, atoms (*jiwei* 極微, *paramāṇu*) are regarded as the particulars. Here we see a clear hierarchy of *dharmas*, beginning with “defiled” and “undefiled” [*dharmas*], and ending with atoms. In Kuiji’s own words:

[4] Question: If *rūpaskandha* is the particular, then defiled and undefiled [*dharmas*] are the universals; within *rūpaskandha*, *rūpāyatana* and so forth are the particulars, and *rūpaskandha* is the universal; within *rūpāyatana*, blue and so forth are the particulars, and *rūpāyatana* is the universal; furthermore, if blue and so forth are the universals, each [blue-colored thing, such as] a tree and so forth, is the particular; if the tree and so forth are the universals, branches and so forth are the particulars; if the branch and so forth are the universals, atoms are the particulars.

Now, when you say that [a word] cannot [refer to] the particular characteristic, do you mean that it cannot refer to the particular characteristic of *rūpa* “common” to [all] *rūpaskandhas*, or that it cannot refer to the particular characteristic of *rūpa* “specific” to blue and others?

Answer: It can refer neither to *rūpa*[*skandha*], nor to blue and so forth, because all [such *dharmas*] are not referred to by [verbal] designations.

問曰。如色蘊是自相、漏無漏是共相。色蘊之中色處等是自相、色蘊是共相。色處中青等是自相、色處是共相。又青等是共相、隨一樹等是自相。樹等是共相、枝等是自相。枝等是共相、極微爲自相。今言不得自相、爲是不得色蘊色總自相。爲不得青等色別自相。

答曰。俱不得色及青等。皆詮不及故 (T1830:43.288b8-14).

Towards the end of the following discussion, Kuiji further refers to the Mahāyānistic conviction that no words can ever refer to anything in any way, and that, ultimately, even the general characteristic cannot be expressed by words:

[5] Question: In that case, how can [verbal] expressions refer to the “defiled”, “undefiled”, and so forth? For example, when the Buddha speaks of “the defiled”, his statement [itself] is not defiled; and when ordinary worldlings (*prthagjana*) speak of “the undefiled”, their statements are not undefiled, just as when someone speaks of “fire”, it also does not burn his mouth. How can [verbal expressions] refer to the “defiled” and “undefiled”?

[Answer:] Well, when we say that a word can refer to the essence of the general characteristic, we only mean to negate the ability [of the word] to refer to the particular characteristic, and do not assert that the word can in fact refer to the general characteristic. Thus, the essence of *dharmas* is ineffable [and] it is [only] in terms of conventional language [that we] speak of particular and general characteristics; the particular and general characteristics are expressed by means of conventional language. That is to say, within a certain limit, we provisionally speak of “general characteristics”, but that is not to say that we assert that the particular and general characteristics are [in fact] referred to by words.

問曰。若爾即漏無漏等豈詮得及。如佛言有漏、佛言非有漏。凡夫言無漏、凡夫言非無漏。如詮火時、亦不燒口。豈得漏無漏耶。

而言名得共相之自性、此義但遮得自相、非謂名即得共相。然法體不可說、自相共相以假言詮也。謂有定量且名共相。非謂自共相者名言所及 (T1830:43.288b15-21).

3.2

Kuiji discusses the referent or meaning of a word again when he comments upon the concept of “metaphorical transference” (*upacāra*, *jiashuo* 假說), which appears in the very first verse of the *Triṃśikā vijñaptimātra-*

tāsiddhi of Vasubandhu.¹² In this context, he defines the general characteristic in terms of the exclusion/negation of others (*zheyu* 遮餘) in the following manner:

[6] When we speak of the “general characteristic”, [it means:] when one speaks of “color”, one [in fact] excludes/negates other things, [namely,] non-color; all “color” *dharmas* are included in what is spoken of; and so on, [so that, similarly,] when one speaks of “blue”, one [in fact] excludes/negates non-blue; all blue [colors] are included in what is spoken of. [The exclusion of others] holds generally for all *dharmas* and does not exist only in one entity [of the whole class]; hence, it is called the “general characteristic” and regarded as a concept; it can be termed “general characteristic” by negation of the possibility that it refers to the particular characteristic.

言共相者。如言色時遮餘非色。一切色法皆在所言。乃至言青遮非青。一切青皆在所言。貫通諸法。不唯在一事體中。故名共相 說爲假也。遮得自相 名得共相 (T1830:43.296b21-25).

Kuiji also refers to a hierarchy of *dharmas*, as we already mentioned above. The hierarchy consists of: (1) at the uppermost level, such general characteristics as “emptiness” and “non-self” (*kong wuwo deng* 空無我等, *sūnyatā*, *nairātmya*, etc.), which are shared by all *dharmas*; (2) the “five aggregates” (*wuyun* 五蘊, *pañcaskandha*), such as “matter” (*seyun* 色蘊, *rūpaskandha*), which consists of 10 sub-categories (viz. the five sense-organs and their respective objects); (3) the twelve “spheres” (*chu* 處, *āyatana*) such as “color-sphere” (*sechu* 色處, *rūpāyatana*), which consists of the “different kinds” (*leibie* 類別) of colors, such as blue and yellow; (4) kinds/classes (*lei* 類) of various “entities” (*shiti* 事體, **vastu*), such as “[a tree] with blue fruits” and “[a tree] without flowers”; (5) entities, which consist of many “atoms” (*jiwei* 極微, *paramāṇu*); and finally (6) atoms, at the bottommost level of all. However, even atoms, insofar as

¹² T1586:31.60a24-25:

由假說我法 有種種相轉
 彼依識所變 此能變唯三
ātmadharmopacāro hi vividho yaḥ pravartate |
vijñānapariṇāme 'sau pariṇāmaḥ sa ca tridhā || Lévi, 1925: 8-13.

they are expressible (*keshuo* 可說), are not particulars, but rather, are also another instance of a general characteristic. Therefore, particulars are ineffable (*bukeshuo* 不可說), and whatever is effable is a general characteristic. Moreover, in the final analysis, there exists neither the general nor the particular characteristic. Kuiji lays out this view as follows:

[7] Within the [category of the] the five *skandhas*, if the entities [called] the five *skandhas* are regarded as particular characteristics, principles such as “emptiness” and “non-self” are regarded as general characteristics. When we analyze the *skandhas*, they consist of *āyatanas*, [and then] *rūpa* is divided into ten [sub-categories]; [then] *āyatanas* are called “particular characteristics” and the *skandha* is called the “general characteristic”, because the one *rūpaskandha* embraces all ten [*āyatanas*]. Within one *āyatana* there are different kinds [of colors], such as blue and yellow; the kinds [of colors] are called “particular characteristics”, and the *āyatana* is called the “general characteristic”. Within one kind [of color], such as blue, there are many entities, such as [trees] with blue fruits, [trees] without flowers, etc.; the kind is regarded as the “general characteristic”, and the entities are called “particular characteristics”. Within one entity, there are many atoms; the entity is regarded as the “general characteristic”, and the atoms are regarded as “particular characteristics”.

By developing [this line of analysis] in this way, we reach the “ineffable”, which is regarded as the “particular characteristic”, while the effable “atoms” and so forth are regarded as “general characteristics”. Therefore, if we proceed according to logic, there [ultimately] exists no essence of the “particular characteristic”.

Provisionally, we call the essence of *dharmas*, which [itself] is ineffable, the “particular characteristic”, and expressible [things] “general characteristics”. Strictly speaking, [however,] the general [characteristic] is not general, and neither is the particular [characteristic] particular. We speak of them separately only in order to [show how they] exclude/negate each other.

如五蘊中以五蘊事爲自相。空無我等理爲共相。分蘊成處。色成於十。處名自相、蘊名共相。一色蘊該十故。於一處中青黃等類別。

類名自相、處名共相。於一青等類中有多事體。葉青非華等。以類爲共相。事名爲自相。一事中有多極微。以事爲共相。以極微爲自相。

如是展轉至不可說爲自相。可說極微等爲共相。故以理推無自相體。

且說不可言法體名自相。可說爲共相。以理而論、共既非共、自亦非自。爲互遮故。但各別說 (T1830:43.296b27-c9)。

Kuiji further identifies the conceptual cognition of “blue” with inference (*biliangzhi* 比量知). According to him, visual perception (*yanshi* 眼識) takes a certain color-sphere as its object, but it does not form a judgment of the form, “This is a color-sphere,” because the direct object of perception is not the general characteristic (*gongxiang* 共相), but the particular characteristic (*zixiang* 自相). By contrast, mental and conceptual cognition (*yishi* 意識), which occurs immediately after perception, does take the general characteristic of color as its object, and makes a judgment like, “This is blue,” because it does not continue to take the color in general as its object. Kuiji declares that one forms a judgment that something is “blue” by excluding others, i. e., things that are not blue. In this connection, it is interesting to note that he quotes Verse 16 of Vasubandhu’s *Vimśikā* to support his argument. However, Vasubandhu is there arguing that the external object cannot be directly perceived by perception, and thereby criticizing the Sautrāntika theory of perception, which is generally accepted by Dignāga. Therefore, for the moment, I am not so convinced by Kuiji’s reference to *Vimśikā* v. 16.

[8] Now, taking a blue thing as object, if one forms a judgment [that it is] “blue”, this is [a case of] inferential cognition. It is not adequate to the *dharma* in front [of the cognizer]. If visual perception takes color as its object, because it is adequate to the particular characteristic [of color], it does not form a judgment of [the form] “color”. Mental cognition, which arises [immediately] after perception, takes the general characteristic of color as its object, and since it does not continue to take color [in general as its object], it makes a judgment of [the form] “This is blue.” It forms this judgment of [the form] “This is blue” by excluding others, i.e., non-blue things; it is not the case that to make a judgment of [the form] “This is blue” is adequate to the blue thing.

Therefore, in a verse of the *Viṃśikā*, it says: “Perception is like a dream, etc.; when perception has arisen, there is neither object nor direct vision [of that object]; how can it be the valid means of knowledge called Perception?”

今緣於青作青解者、此比量知。不稱前法。如眼識綠色、稱自相故、不作色解。後起意識綠色共相。不著色故、遂作青解。遮餘非青之物、遂作青解。非謂青解即稱青事。故二十唯識伽他中言。現覺如夢等。已起現覺時。見及境已無。寧許有現量 (T1830:43.296c17-22).¹³

Kuiji concludes that conventional cognition (*jiazhi* 假智) takes only the general characteristic as its object, because the unique and particular characteristic of a *dharma*, in short, the *dharma* itself, is not the object of conceptual cognition. The same is true with verbal cognition. It refers to the general characteristic only, just as the expression “blue lotus” (*qing lianhua* 青蓮華) is possible because “blue” and “lotus” share what is to be excluded/rejected in common. It is interesting to notice that Kuiji refers here to the expression “blue lotus”, which is discussed so many times by Dignāga in his *Apoha* chapter.

[9] This is because conventional cognition arises only by taking the general characteristic as its object, because the particular characteristic of the *dharma* is devoid of conceptual construction. This is also true of verbal designations; they are not adequate to the real *dharma*, and they are applied to the general characteristic alone, just as a verbal designation such as “blue lotus” is [applied to the general characteristic], which is excluded [by both “non-blue” and “non-lotus”].

此¹⁴謂假智唯緣共相而得起故。法之自相離分別故。言說亦爾。不稱本法。亦但只於共相處轉。如說青蓮華等。有所遮故 (T1830:43.296c23-25).

¹³ Cf. T1590:31.76b18-19; *Viṃśikā* v. 16:
pratyakṣabuddhiḥ svapnādau yathā sā ca yadā tadā |
na so 'rtho dr̥ṣyate tasya pratyakṣatvaṃ katham matam || Lévi, 1925: 2.

¹⁴ 此 emendation: 比 Taisho ed.

4

Let me summarize Kuiji's knowledge of *apoha* and other theories in Dignāga's epistemology.

- 1) Kuiji knows that there are two means of valid cognition (*liang* 量), viz., perception (*xianliang* 現量) and inference (*biliang* 比量); and that the former takes the particular characteristic (*zixiang* 自相) as its object, while the latter takes the general characteristic (*gongxiang* 共相).
- 2) Kuiji defines the general characteristic as "exclusion of others" (*zheyu* 遮餘), and both inference and verbal cognition take the general characteristic as their object by "excluding others". Therefore, the exclusion of others is the general nature and function of conceptual cognition, including both inference and verbal cognition.
- 3) The particular characteristic of an object, or the object itself, is beyond the reach of conceptual cognition. Thus, it cannot be expressed by any verbal designation (*yanshuo* 言說). Only the general characteristic can be expressed verbally.
- 4) However, ultimately speaking, even the general characteristic cannot be expressed by any verbal designation. This idea might not have been endorsed by Dignāga and other Indian Buddhist logicians. However, Jñānaśrīmitra, who enters the discussion on *apoha* at the final stage of Indian Buddhism, declares that he expounds *apoha* theory in order to show that nothing can be verbally expressed (see the introductory verse of his *Apoḥaprakaraṇa*¹⁵).
- 5) Kuiji seems to understand the distinction between the particular and the universal as relative to one another, just as in the hierarchy of the Vaiśeṣika categories. This understanding again might not have been endorsed by Dignāga, because for him, only the universal characteristics are relative to each other and constitute a hierarchy. In any case, it is important that Kuiji refers to the hierarchical construc-

¹⁵ See Katsura, 1986. Cf. also Katsura, 1991; Katsura, 2011.

tion of Buddhist *dharmas* when he discusses verbal and conceptual cognition.

Abbreviations

NMukh	<i>Nyāyamukha</i>
PS	<i>Pramāṇasamuccaya</i>
PSV	<i>Pramāṇasamuccayasvavṛtti</i>

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